



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

John M. Brannen II
Senior Air Safety Investigator
Central Region

Date: 01/06/2018 – 1/7/2018

Person Contacted: Alonzo (Hotel manager at Punt Islita Hotel)

NTSB Accident Number: CEN18FA063

Narrative:

Alonzo reported that he was the hotel employee that escorted the passengers to the hotel owned airport for the accident flight and the flight that left about 15 minutes before the accident flight. He reported the following information:

- Previous flight departed and made the right turn through the pass that leads back out to the ocean but the accident flight did not. He mentioned that he had discussion with both pilots before the flights and they both mentioned that in order to take off to the north that the pass needed to be used because the airplane didn't have enough performance to climb over the mountain.
- Alonzo mentioned that he talked to the accident flight captain and the captain noted that he wasn't sure which takeoff method he would use (ie: South vs North)
- He witnessed the takeoffs of both airplane and in the case of the accident airplane he said that the airplane took off and looked as if it was starting to make the right turn but then the wings leveled. He thought to himself that they should have taken the right turn. He continued to watch the airplane and saw it make a left turn which he believed was to turn out of the mountain valley but the airplane suddenly nosed into the ground.
- He said he was surprised when the two airplanes departed to the north as most of the time airplanes will accept a tailwind and depart to the south since a south departure is out over the coast and there aren't any mountains in that direction.
- He showed the investigative team the airport grounds and noted that they had just placed a new windsock on the windsock frame at the north end of the airport. Note: the investigative team travelled to the south and saw a windsock frame with no windsock and there was a new windsock still in its package ready to be installed.
- He also showed the investigative team the locations of security cameras located on the airport. These had been placed in the past due to unauthorized use of the airport. The cameras captured

portions of the previous and accident airplane takeoffs. Copies of the videos were provided to the team.

- Alonzo reported that he himself carried the baggage to the airplane and that there were 4 large bags but they were of average weight and not overly heavy.
- He reported that the wind on the day the investigative team visited (1/6/2018), the winds were about the same or lighter than on the accident day. Note: at this time the north end windsock was present and based on the way it was flying the team estimated the wind between 10-15 knots.
- Alonzo reported that he was aware of the bird strike and he witnessed the accident airplane's captain on the phone with the airplane operator's maintenance facility discussing the damage to the left wing and that the captain waited for a maintenance release which was why the accident airplane left so far behind the previous airplane.
- He reported that except for the expected right turn the takeoff of the accident airplane appeared normal and he didn't see any smoke or hear anything out of the ordinary.
- He reported that there is no pressure from the hotel for airplane operators to make flights and if a flight must be cancelled the hotel is accustomed to making other travel arrangements for guests.
- He stated that the first airplane carried passengers that had connecting flights later that day and more pressing time constraints. He said that the passengers on the second (accident) plane did not have connections that day and did not have pressing time constraints.
- He stated that he did not sense anyone that appeared scared to fly in the airplane and that he didn't observe any friction between the passengers and the flight crew.

-----end of entries-----